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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/04/2015  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [CO](#)  
SUBJECT: BODY OF AFRO-COLOMBIAN LEADER ORLANDO VALENCIA  
FOUND; GOC FOCUS ON LOCAL POLICE, BUSINESS INTERESTS

REF: BOGOTA 9963

Classified By: Ambassador William B. Wood. Reasons: 1.4(b) and (d).

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Summary  
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¶1. (C) On November 2, a senior government official informed the Embassy that the GOC had positively identified the body of kidnapped Afro-Colombian leader Orlando Valencia, discovered on October 24 after a nine-day search (reftel). The GOC continues to investigate the circumstances surrounding his kidnapping and murder and is now focusing on local police and African palm oil business interests.

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GOC Says Body is Valencia  
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¶2. (C) Carlos Franco, Director of the President's Office on Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, told D/Polcouns November 2 that the GOC had positively identified the body of kidnapped Afro-Colombian leader Orlando Valencia. The official Prosecutor General's Office report on the subject has not yet been released, he said, but there is no doubt the body is Valencia.

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Focus on Police, Palm Oil Interests  
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¶3. (C) Franco said the GOC investigation is now focused on African palm oil farmers and local police. Franco recounted conversations he had recently with leaders of the Elmer Cardenas paramilitary bloc, prominent in the Choco Department, who insisted that they had nothing to do with either the kidnapping or murder. Franco said he tends to believe them.

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Comment  
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¶4. (C) The Ambassador raised the importance of a quick, thorough investigation to capture and prosecute the murderers with Vice President Santos on October 30. He met with a delegation of Peace Brigades International on November 4 and reiterated that the Embassy would continue to press the GOC for answers.  
WOOD